

CLASS OF 1816.

ABRAHAM A. HALSEY

Born October 8, 1798 at 1 a. m.

Married Elizabeth, daughter of Col. Greenwood Le Flore of Grenada, Miss., who died in Mississippi in 1847, aged about twenty-eight, leaving three children.

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He was born at Fishkill, N. Y., and was fitted for college by Daniel H. Barnes (Union 1809) at Poughkeepsie; entered the Junior Class of Union College in 1813, but lost a year by ill health, and graduated in 1816; studied medicine for a time with his father, but disliking that profession studied law with Thomas J. Oakley, Esq., at Poughkeepsie, then with Mr. Thompson at Monticello, and after his death with Mr. Thompson's brother-in-law, Minot Mitchell, of White Plains. He was induced to begin his law practice at Liberty, Sullivan Co., where his father had a small farm, and which was then a new settlement inhabited principally by lumbermen. It took two days to drive to Liberty, but it took only one to return to Fishkill. Becoming dissatisfied with his profession he formed a partnership first, with Sylvanus Rapalje, and afterwards with a Mr. Doty, and carried on a mercantile business in New York for a few years. He was afterwards in business as a broker but lost his property principally through the depreciation of Morris Canal stock. After this he went abroad on business for his cousin, John C. Halsey, and spent a year in England and France. While in France, one of our public functionaries died, and by invitation of General Lafayette, Mr. Halsey accompanied the remains to La Grange. The funeral services over, he would have returned immediately to Paris, but the hospitable Marquis would not consent to part with him so soon and entertained him in magnificent style at his Chateau for several weeks, assigning to him a suit of rooms with an American servant, and placing at his disposal his stable and carriages for any excursion the beautiful country invited. After this he spent two years traveling through Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee settling up business matters for his cousin, John C. Halsey, who carried on an extensive fur and hat trade through those States. The country was still hardly settled and most of his traveling was done on horseback. He was always a very religious man and in his travels whenever his business permitted, acted as a missionary, distributing Bibles, tracts, etc. He became acquainted with Mr. Lane and other gentlemen then engaged in founding the Lane Seminary. Mr. Lane gave him \$10,000 with which to purchase goods in New York and transport them to Vicksburg, selling them on joint account. When he arrived at Vicksburg he found that the market was already overstocked and the new city itself in the possession of a "reckless,



FEB 23 1972

February 23, 1972

Mr. John C. Coleman,  
1231 Quinn Street,  
Jackson, Mississippi 39202.

Dear Mr. Coleman:

The information you send about the gold medal which was apparently awarded to Abram Halsey in 1816 is interesting indeed. As you can see from the enclosure -- all that appears in Halsey's file here -- we have a brief record of his life, very possibly identical to one in your possession. There is no information in the file but the archives reveal (Faculty Records, December 13, 1805 to November 22, 1850) that Abram Halsey received a gold medal in 1816 (worth ten dollars) for second honors.

Since the archives also contain one example of the gold medal issued in those years -- ours is for 1819 -- we are not interested in adding to the collection as such by purchase. We are grateful all the same for the information you supply of the whereabouts of another. If you wish to make a gift of it to the College, we shall of course be glad to have it and to credit its source to you.

Sincerely,

Harold C. Martin,  
President.

Enc.

bc: Dr. Tolan

✓ Mr. Pearson (with letter and materials from Mr. Coleman)



The President  
Union College  
Schenectady, New York

1231 Gunn Street  
Jackson Mississippi 39202  
7 February 1972

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to you regarding one of Union College's illustrious graduates... The late Hon. Abraham (Abram) Halsey of Fishkill, Dutchess County, New York, was born in 1798, and died in 1852 of nervous bilious fever, in the home of Andrew Hossack, Esq., a Scotchman ~~then~~ living on the Isthmus of Darien, Panama, Central America.

He was fitted for college by Daniel H. Barnes, Esq., of Poughkeepsie, entered Junior class Union College in 1813, but lost a year by ill health, and graduated a Gold Medal Man in 1816.

In 1835, Abraham married Elizabeth, the ~~gracious~~, beautiful and brilliant daughter of the famous Chickatawba Indian Chief, Greenwood LeFlore, Carroll County, Mississippi. Though most of the Halsey's effects were lost in a fire some years ago, Abraham's gold medal was later found in Chief LeFlore's lapdesk and identified the former's son, the late Hon. John Beach Halsey.

I am enclosing a copy of this historical item for your archives. It is solid gold 2 1/2" x 2 1/2". Though not the best Latin scholar, I believe the translation is as follows:

NEXT PAGE



Gradi: Sectarum (tuam) in honorem datum  
calosissimum consecratus V Calendae (Kalendae)  
mDCCXVI = Grad. sec. in Cal. hon. dat.  
Con. V Kal Aug 1816 (July 28). =

Advance your position until the highest honor  
has been given. Dedicated the fifth Calends of August  
1816 (July 28).

- And -

Vita brevis est gloriae cursus sempiternus =

A brief life is a perpetual voyage to glory or A short  
life is an everlasting journey to glory. Since "et" is self  
understood as an intercalation after vita brevis (life is short).

While the serpents entwined around the thyrsus are medical  
symbols, the thyrsus, itself, of course, <sup>is</sup> ~~not~~ not.

Presently, I am engaged in research work relating to  
LeDore & the Halsey family. I shall appreciate  
the favor if you will inform me ~~of the record~~  
of <sup>is record</sup> Abraham Halsey of Union College, and, of course, facts  
relating to the medal. Mr Halsey was a distinguished  
attorney, a friend of Gen. Lafayette, and represented mining  
interests & landowners in Europe, <sup>in</sup> Texas, and in Panama.

Actually, the College should possess this valuable Americana.  
Would your institution be interested in purchasing it? a  
museum tried to buy it 6 years ago. Sincerely,

John C. Coleman



DATE February 18, 19 72*Memorandum*for Dr. Harold C. MartinFROM Edwin K. Tolan

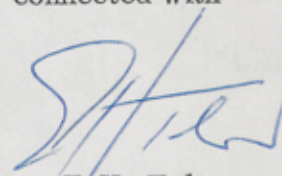
I return your letter to Mr. John C. Coleman, together with the accompanying documents. The information we have is that some time between 1809 and 1814 medals were first given to students as prizes; gold medals worth \$30.00 and \$20.00 were given for first honors; gold medals worth \$15.00 and \$10.00 for second honors; and silver ones in the value of \$6.00 and \$7.00 for third honors.

Abram Halsey received a gold medal worth \$10.00 for second honors in 1816.

This information is taken from Faculty Records, December 13, 1805–November 22, 1850. It is a large book, and we cannot xerox the page on which the entry for Halsey appears.

We have a gold medal in our collection worth \$15.00 which was awarded for second honors to Theodore V.W. Anthony in 1819.

So far as we are able to determine, these medals are in no way connected with Nott Scholars.

  
E. K. Tolan

EKT:tcg

Enclosure



gambling, murderous set of rowdies," who made it an unfit place for well disposed people to live. He therefore went to Rankin, a place in the interior of the State, and after two years of perserving lebor disposed of his stock without loss to his partner, but without great profit to himself. He now went into business for himself, accumulated some property, and married Miss Le Flore, whose father, Col. Greenwood Le Flore, was a very wealthy planter, and Chief of the Choctaw Nation. Col. Le Flore was a thoroughly Union man throughout the late war, and openly defied General Forrest and other Confederate officers to disturb him. General Sherman went out of his way to visit him. His character was so high and his position so assured that the only injury he received was the burning of his outbuildings which Gen. Forrest ordered done. At the time of his marriage Mr. Halsey had accumulated \$100,000 and was settled upon a plantation belonging to his wife where he was beloved by all, both white and black. Dr., afterwards United Senator Gwin, who was then a commission merchant in New Orleans, induced him to become his partner. H even assumed Mr. Halsey's consent and organized the house and moved on accordingly. In less than six months, Mr. Halsey's fortune had disappeared and some \$90,000 which Col. Le Flore paid for him. This was in 1840, and in attempting to make the money to repay his father-in-law, whb, however, never asked it of him, Mr. Halsey spent the remainder of his life. For years he labored saving to the Choctaw Indians claims which were due them from the government, but of which they had been robbed by unscrupulous agents. He made a great deal for the Indians, but after years spent in the pestilential lowlands of the Yazoo, came out no better financially himself. He then turned to Texas and secured a large body of land which he spent two years in Germany and England endeavoring to place. From England he went to Central America to look after certain gold mines at the request of their English owners, and here at Panama he died of bilious fever, March 17, 1852.

"He was from earliest youth and throughout his eventful life distinguished for amiability of temper, benevolence of disposition, uprightness and independence of character and at all times exhibited a deportment so gentlemanly and ingenuous as to win without manifesting any anxiety for it, the friendship, esteem and confidence of all who knew him."

FROM Thomas Halsey of Hertfordshire, England  
Jacob L. and Edmund D. Halsey  
Morristown, N. J.  
1895.



Abraham A. Halsey

1816  
A B



Abraham A. Halsey <sup>1816</sup>  
F.B.